DOCUMENT RESUME

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TITLE	Effective Questioning: Elementary Level (Minicourse 1). Description of Teacher Inservice Education Materials.
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ABSTRACT

The inservice self-instructional minicourse described here is intended to give teachers knowledge of and practice on using specific questioning techniques that increase students' participation and learning during class discussion. The classroom techniques include redirection, refocusing, handling incorrect responses, pausing, using higher cognitive questions, asking for clarification, and reducing teacher behavior that interferes with the flow of class discussion. Information is provided in this description of the purposes and content of the course and materials as well as activities and resources. A critique, history of development, and ordering information are also included. (DS)

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DESCRIPTION OF TEACHER IN-SERVICE EDUCATION MATERIALS

A. SUMMARY INFORMATION

Title: EFFECTIVE QUESTIONING: ELEMENTARY LEVEL (Minicourse 1)

Publication Date(s): Copyright 1970

Intended Users: New or experienced teachers who want to learn effective questioning techniques

Grade Level(s): Elementary grades

Number: Maximum of ten (in one school) per videotape recorder

Primary Focus: This gives teachers knowledge of and practice in using specific questioning techniques that increase students participation and learning during class discussion.

School subject(s) and/or in-service topic(s) covered:

Develop teacher skill in questioning techniques such as redirection, refocusing, handling incorrect responses, pausing, using higher cognitive questions, asking for clarification and reducing teacher behavior that interferes with the flow of class discussions. No limitations on subject matter applicability are specified.

What participant does in using the materials:

Throughout the course, teachers read about specific questioning skills, view films that explain and illustrate the skills, practice their use and evaluate their own progress in acquiring the skills. Skill practice is accomplished through videotaping a brief discussion with a small group of students. Teachers use their own curricum materials in practice discussions.

Resources:

Described as self-instructional, the course requires no instructor, but a coordinator is recommended to facilitate course operation. A Handbook is required for each teacher; a set of 11 films is required for each school site. The course requires 5 weeks to complete, with activities scheduled on 3 or 4 days per week. Each week's work involves about 6 hours of in-or-out-of-school time. Each teacher needs 8 hours of released time for microteaching. A small room is needed in each school for videotaping activities.

Describer critique:

The course has a commendable emphasis on increasing the quantity and quality of student participation in discussions, and the self-study, self-evaluative nature of the instructional style may be especially attractive to some teachers. The videotaping activities would be very helpful and enjoyable for both teachers and students.

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B. IN-DEPTH INFORMATION

Title: Effective Questioning: Elementary Level (Minicourse 1)

Publication Date(s): Copyright 1970

Intended Users: New or experienced teachers who want to learn effective questioning techniques

Grade Level(s): Elementary grades

Number: Maximum of ten (in one school) per videotape recorder

Primary Focus: This gives teachers knowledge of and practice in using specific questioning techniques that increase students participation and learning during class discussion.

1.0 PURPOSES:

The overall course objective is to develop teacher skills in specific questioning techniques that increase student participation and learning during class discussions. In support of this general objective, each of four instructional sequences includes specific procedures to accomplish the following objectives:*

Sequence 1: To change teacher behavior in order to increase pupil readiness to respond to discussion questions.

Sequence 2: To improve teacher skills so as to decrease the amount of teacher participation and increase the amount of pupil participation.

Sequence 3: To increase teacher use of probing techniques in order to guide the pupil to more complete and thoughtful responses.

Sequence 4: To reduce teacher behavior that interferes with the flow of the discussion.

* quoted from Teachers Handbook, pp. 16-19.

2.0 CONTENT — Scope and Sequencing of Topics:

The developers specify that teachers are expected to acquire the following skills:

Introduction: Redirection, refocusing.

Sequence 1: Pausing, handling incorrect responses, calling on non-volunteers.

Sequence 2: Redirection, questions calling for a set of related facts, questions calling for higher cognitive processes.

Sequence 3: Prompting, seeking further clarification, refocusing.

Sequence 4: Reduction of repeating one's own questions, answering one's own questions, and repeating pupil answers.

The eleven accompanying films restate each of the teaching skills described above and illustrate their application in actual student/teacher discussions in a number of subject areas.

Course materials are designed to be used in the sequence above and in their entirety.

3.0 ACTIVITIES AND RESOURCES INVOLVED IN USE OF PRODUCT

3.1 Description of main in-service activities:

With slight variations among the instructional sequences, course activities for each sequence follow a pattern of reading about a small number of skills in the Handbook, viewing related instructional and model films, planning and conducting two videotaped microteach lesson in which the skills are applied, and self-evaluating the videotaped practice lessons. Except for group viewing of the films, teachers complete these activities individually and independently, working with students from their own classrooms. Teachers receive one hour of released time for each of eight microteach sessions. Teachers use their own curriculum materials in videotaped lessons. The course requires 5 weeks to complete, with activities scheduled on 3-4 days per week. Total time is about 6 hours per week.

3.2 Help given in use of product:

The Teachers Handbook (94 pp, soft cover) provides a sequential list of the course activities and gives detailed instructions for planning and evaluating practice lessons. Each teacher requires a Handbook. The Coordinators Handbook (63 pp., soft cover) contains very detailed instructions to assist with course operations: e.g., introductory meeting agenda, videotape training procedures, sample daily calendars. Requirement is one per coordinator or site. There are eleven 16mm color/sound films: an introductory film, five instructional films and five model lesson films. Each film is about 10-15 minutes long.

4.0 EVALUATION OF TEACHER INSERVICE LEARNING

Evaluation and assessment is built into each instructional sequence and is conducted privately and individually. Teachers replay their practice videotapes and complete "Teacher Self-Evaluation Forms," which are contained in the Handbook. The developers stress that the videotapes and self-evaluation forms are for individual guidance in assessing progress and planning subsequent practice lessons. They recommend that teachers be free to erase their videotapes and that no coordinator or supervisor have access to self-evaluative data from participating teachers.

5.0 ORDERING INFORMATION

5.1 Resources required/recommended:

Intended for use with a videotape recording system--one in each participating school (with a maximum of 10 teachers per school). A room at least 8' x 12' must be available for microteaching in each school. Each participant requires 9 one-hour periods of released time, spread over 6 weeks, for microteaching. Other requirements are a 20-minute reel of videotape per teacher, a 16mm film projector per school, and a person to serve as coordinator.

5.2 Distributor name/address:

Macmillan Publishing Company
866 Third Avenue
New York, New York 10022
(212) 935-2000

5.3 Components/approximate costs:

Component	Purchase	Rental	No. Req.	Reusable
Teachers Handbook	$3.30		1/participate	No*
Coordinators Handbook	$4.50		1/site	yes
Eleven 16mm color/sound films	$1,575	$201.15	1/site	yes

* The bulk of the Teachers Handbook is reusable; however, the course activity forms are consumable. Additional handbook copies would be necessary if forms were duplicated for use by each teacher.

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6.0 HISTORY OF DEVELOPMENT

6.1 Identification of the developer: This minicourse on questioning skills was written by Walter R. Borg, Marjorie L. Kelley and Philip Langer of Far West Laboratory for Educational Research and Development. The Minicourse teacher training format was developed at the Laboratory under the leadership of Dr. Borg and was adapted from the microteaching approach developed at Stanford University.

6.2 How developed and when:

The development of Minicourse 1 extended over two years (1967-1969) and involved three field tests in the Berkeley, Palo Alto, Pleasanton and San Lorenzo Unified School Districts in California. Course materials were revised after each test.

6.3 Evidence of effectiveness with users:

The authors state that "approximately 97% of responding teachers who took Effective Questioning - Elementary Level, rated it superior to any other inservice training they had received. Handbook includes pre and post Minicourse questioning skills for students and 48 teachers from several California and Nevada school districts. Data show that these students and teachers profited from the course. In addition, the behavioral changes associated with the course training persisted after four months."

C. DESCRIBER CRITIQUE

Appropriateness / adaptability / technical quality:

This is especially appropriate for teachers in the intermediate grades, and the questioning techniques are useful in all subject areas. The Mini-course format does not encourage flexibility in content or delivery procedures. Teachers should be aware of the time and equipment requirements. The Handbook and films are professionally produced and technically correct.

Content accuracy/social fairness/community acceptance issues:

Questioning techniques are accurately described in the Handbook and illustrated in the films. The demonstration lessons in the films show teachers engaged in discussion with small groups of students; teachers taking the course may not feel confident about generalizing these questioning skills to a larger discussion situation.

Overall summary/comment:

The course has a commendable emphasis on increasing the quantity and quality of student participation in discussions, and the self-study, self-evaluative nature of the instructional style may be especially attractive to some teachers. The videotaping activities would be very helpful and ejoyable for both teachers and students.